

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /068 W

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R 131510Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9156

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 6821

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CG, ECON, ELAB, PINS

SUBJECT: LABOR TROUBLES CONTINUE, KIKONGI DEFENDS UNTZA

REF: KINSHASA 6088

1. EMBASSY CONTINUES TO RECEIVE REPORTS OF LABOR UNREST IN ZAIRE. IN LUBUMBASHI, ACCORDING TO THE LOCAL PRESS, A WORKERS' STRIKE AT SNCZ WAS THWARTED WHEN CAPTAIN GENERAL BUMBA DISMISSED A NUMBER OF DISSIDENT WORKERS.

2. IN LIKASI LAST WEEK, ACCORDING TO UNCONFIRMED REPORTS, APPROXIMATELY FIVE HUNDRED WOMEN MARCHED TO PROTEST THE CONTINUED INCARCERATION OF A SHOP STEWARD INVOLVED IN AN EARLIER WORKERS' ACTION. AND IN MBUJI-MAYI, ANTI-GOVERNMENT TRACTS CONTINUED TO CIRCULATE.

3. MOBUTU HAS DEVOTED MUCH ATTENTION TO THE TURBULENT LABOR SITUATION. (REF). IN THE POLITICAL BUREAU MEETING JULY 21, THE PRESIDENT CITED RISING LABOR PROTEST AND DEMANDED AN EXPLANATION OF KIKONGI, SECRETARY GENERAL OF UNTZA. IN RESPONSE, KIKONGI PRESENTED THE PRESIDENT WITH A HARD-HITTING WRITTEN REPORT (CLOSELY HELD BUT OBTAINED BY EMBASSY) WHICH LAY THE BLAME FOR MUCH OF THE TROUBLE UPON THE ILL-ADVISED ZAIRIANIZATION AND RADICALIZATION PROGRAMS.

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4. THE UNTZA REPORT NOTED THAT WITH ZAIRIANIZATION AND

RADICALIZATION HAVE COME:

- INCOMPETENT MANAGEMENT OF CRITICAL ENTERPRISES
- TRIBALISM AND VENALIY IN INDUSTRY
- TARDINESS IN WAGE PAYMENTS AND
- REFUSAL OF MANAGERS TO NEGOTIATE WITH UNIONS.

THE REPORT ALSO STATED THAT THE PROLIFERATION OF MPR ORGANS WITHIN EACH ENTERPRISE HAS ERODED UNTZA'S STRENGTH. KIKONGI'S POSITION IS THAT LABOR PROBLEMS CANNOT BE SOLVED WITHOUT THE REESTABLISHMENT OF UNTZA AS SOLE REPRESENTATIVE OF WORKERS.

5. COMMENT.

WHETHER MOBUTU WILL ACCEPT UNTZA'S ARGUMENTS IS NOT CLEAR. AT ONE POLITICAL BUREAU MEETING RECENTLY, MOBUTU REPORTEDLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HIS GREATEST MISTAKE DURING THE LAST TEN YEARS WAS ZAIRIANIZATION. BUT LABOR LEADERS NOW FEAR THAT HE WILL ABOLISH THE UNION AND ASSIGN ITS FUNCTIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR. SUCH ACTION, THEY PREDICT, WOULD BRING FURTHER CONFRONTATION BETWEEN WORKERS AND GOVERNMENT.
WALKER

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